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Fong-Students

LESS STUDENTS TO BE SENT ABROAD FOR FIRST DEGREE COURSES

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 23 (Bernama) -- The government plans to gradually reduce the number of students it sends overseas for first degree courses, Deputy Education Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said today.

He said students would be encouraged to study locally in line with the government's plan to increase the number of universities and promote the setting up of private colleges in Malaysia.

He said this when asked by reporters at Parliament House to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement yesterday that the government would cut down on the number of students sent for studies abroad.

Fong added, however, that the government would continue to sponsor students abroad for certain first degree courses such as information technology, high technology and medicine because Malaysia lacked expertise in these fields.

The government would also continue sending students abroad for post-graduate courses because these students would act as agents for technological development.

Fong said his ministry was concerned that Malaysian students abroad tended to mix among only themselves and thereby failing to adequately master the English language and interact with the local community.

There are some 14,000 Malaysian students in Britain, 12,000 in the United States and 11,000 in Australia. -- BERNAMA

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